

SMH Hygiene Protocols

T & M Guesthouse Limited

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Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic is a global issue. Tourism is, by its nature, a global industry. It follows that to implement effective hygiene controls the best international practices must be identified, reviewed and best practices implemented. The author of this document has researched many credible sources such as the World Health Organisations (WHO), various government health departments and commercial organisations that operate in the hospitality industry. From this research, the Hygiene protocols to be implemented by hotel staff have been determined, recorded and documented.

Hygiene affects many different aspects of the operation of the hotel, not just cleaning. However, the perception of guests is key to ensuring that the reputation of the hotel is maintained when it comes to the health of the guests. How guests are re-assured that their stay is safe, what precautions the hotel is taking to keep them safe during their stay and the role the guest plays in maintaining hygiene levels is essential to maintaining the hotel's reputation. That is why this document will cover topics from, how to welcome guests without scaring them to detailed protocols to be used by housekeeping staff.

A vital aspect of the protocols used within the hotel, is ensuring that the protocols are up to date, relevant and accurate at all times. To this end, the hotel will use a variety of credible websites which include, but is not limited to:

WHO - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

UK Government - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

The management of the hotel will, on a regular basis, check the above websites to ensure that it is following the latest advice and recommendations from these organisations. As and when the advice changes, so the appropriate protocol will be updated, promulgated and implemented as soon as is possible.

Purpose

This document defines all measures being implemented by the hotel management and staff to reduce and control the risk of infection from COVID-19 in the hotel at all times. Not only does this cover all indoor aspects of the hotel but also the external areas such as the car park, garden and entrances.

Hygiene protocols

General

In drawing up these protocols a variety of credible sources have been used such as:

- The WHO advice for COVID-19 Management in the accommodation sector (2020).
- The Hong Kong Government 'Health Advice on Prevention of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) for Hotel Industry' (2020).
- The Government of India, Ministry of Tourism, Directorate General of Health Services [Emergency Medical Relief] (2020).
- A range of commercial organisations that operate in the hospitality area. Individual references are provided each time an organisation information is used in this document.

Each of the following sections provides information, actions and protocols to be used in a variety of situations. Where necessary, additional hotel documents, procedures and practices are referenced.

Symptoms of COVID-19

According to the WHO, the symptoms of COVID-19 are as follows:

- Most common symptoms:
 - fever.
 - dry cough.
 - tiredness.
- Less common symptoms:
 - aches and pains.
 - sore throat.
 - diarrhoea.
 - conjunctivitis.
 - headache.
 - loss of taste or smell.
 - a rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes.
- Serious symptoms:
 - difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
 - chest pain or pressure.

- loss of speech or movement.

A person must seek immediate medical attention if they exhibit any serious symptoms as soon as they appear.

It should also be noted that on average it takes about four to five days for the virus symptoms to show, however, it can take up to 14 days.

Preventive measures

The hotel Manager will ensure that the following preventative measures are implemented, followed and are effective at all times.

- Staff shall wear a suitable facemask, gloves and maintain good personal hygiene and avoid touching their eyes, mouth and nose.
- In the public areas, 70-80% alcohol-based hand sanitiser dispensers for use by guests will be made available.
- Hygiene kits will be available to guests and facemasks to all visitors.
- Enhance cleaning and disinfection of the premises will take place at least twice a day:
 - Clean and disinfect commonly touched areas eg light switches, tv controls and kettles
 - Clean and disinfect common areas eg reception, common toilet and hallways at least twice daily.
 - Identify and cover porous materials in common areas with materials which can be clean and disinfect easily as far as possible.
- Good ventilation of the premises and rooms will be maintained at all times by opening windows so that a flow of fresh air occurs.
- Ensure that all drainage systems are in proper function. This means running the taps in the bathrooms for ten minutes every time the room is cleaned.
- The duty Manager will ensure that any mass gathering or social activities in the hotel that contravene the current social distancing rules and regulations is prohibited.
- The hotel will take all steps to ensure that any seating arrangement reduces the risk of direct face-to-face encounter in line with Social Distancing guidelines.
- The hotel Manager will keep a list of guests who had stayed in the hotel,

their period of stay (check-in and check-out dates), contact telephone number and email address and where possible their identification/passport number, age, sex and nationality for possible public health action in case a patient is confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 (Kline, Horney and Kirsch, 2020).

- Which days staff worked can be confirmed by the Staff Temperature Record sheet. In addition, should a Health App become available then staff should have the Health App installed on their phones.
- All room keys, when they are returned to reception will be sterilised before they are handed to the next guest. (Bagnaera & Stewart, 2020)
- The pdq machine and telephone are to be cleaned after each use so that it is safe for the next person to use.

Procedure for wearing a facemask

The following instructions were taken from the protocols published by the Government of India (2020) as they are the most precise and clear instructions that the author could find.

- Wash hands as per details in Appendix I.
- Put on gloves.
- Make sure the facemask is the right way round. If unsure ask someone to check for you.
- Place facemask over nose, mouth and chin.
- Secure in place.
- Ensure there are no gaps on either side of the mask.
- Do not let the facemask hang from the neck at any time. If it does, then replace it with a new one.
- Change the facemask every six hours or at the end of the shift, whichever is sooner.
- Disposable facemasks are *not* to be re-used and should be disposed of by placing in a bag, sealing the bag and putting it in the rubbish.

- When removing the facemask great care must be taken not to touch the potentially infected outer surface of the mask. Use the string/elastic that holds the facemask in place in order to remove it.

Check-in at reception

The following protocols apply to all staff who work at reception:

- A facemask must be worn correctly when required to work face to face with the public or in crowded areas.
- Maintain appropriate social distance whenever practicable.
- Perform hand hygiene frequently.
- Guests are to be asked in a re-assuring manner to wear facemasks and maintain good personal hygiene.
- A brief verbal check on the guests' travel history in the past 14 days is to be carried out to ascertain if their travel history has included visits to any affected areas.
- [Prior to check-in, guests are to receive via email details of how the hotel has changed its services to conform with Social Distancing practices](#), enhance cleaning operations and how to contact staff in an emergency (Bagnaera & Stewart, 2020).
- [Payments are to be taken in full prior to arrival. If this does not occur then ask for card payment on arrival. If offered cash politely refuse the cash and ask for a card payment.](#) Where possible and limits allow, accept contactless payments.

General advice for guests

The health, safety and well-being of guests is of importance to the hotel owners, management and staff. The hotel encourages that all guests:

- Observe good personal hygiene, especially on hand hygiene and proper cough manners (Please refer to Appendix I and Appendix II).
- Guest(s) is/are advised to stay in the room if feeling unwell, wear a facemask and call the hotel Manager at once so that arrangements for medical consultation can occur. [This can be by phone or email.](#)
- Guest(s) is/are advised not to take public transport if developed respiratory symptoms.

- The hotel will make any arrangement deemed necessary for the guest to seek medical care to help prevent the spread of infection.

The hotel will [send](#) each guest a 'COVID-19 information sheet' which will re-assure guests by informing them of the precautions the hotel is taking to ensure their safety during their stay. It will also provide information on what action to take if a guest exhibits any COVID-19 symptoms.

Protocols for cleaning rooms – General

All staff are to wear facemasks and gloves when cleaning a room. It does not matter if the room is a stay over or a change. PPE equipment must be worn when cleaning a room. A suitable disinfectant as identified by the Hotel Management will be used to clean all surfaces. Particular care will be taken to ensure that all high touch areas, such as light switches, TV remote controls and appliances, are thoroughly cleaned. Different coloured clothes will be used to clean different parts of the rooms. For example, yellow clothes will be used for bathrooms, blue clothes for bedrooms, etc. The Housekeeping staff will check their cleaning against the latest version of the SMH Cleaning Checklist. The duty Manager will carry out additional checks in a room to ensure that the cleaning carried out is to the required standard. Once a room has been cleaned, the room will be sealed so that guests can be re-assured that the room is clean hygienic and is ready for their use. The hotel booking system will also be updated to show that the room has been cleaned.

Protocols for cleaning common areas – General

At least twice a day, and more often if possible, all high touch areas, such as light switches, door handles and table surfaces are to be cleaned. The exact time when this occurs is up to the housekeeping staff. As a general rule, the common areas will be cleaned in the morning and the afternoon. Additional cleaning may occur in the evening as well depending on the number of guests, usage of the areas and any other relevant factor.

Protocol for guests undergoing self-isolation

There are three aspects to this protocol. The first is [notify all guests staying in the hotel and all OTAs](#), the there is a guest who is self-isolating in the hotel. This is the responsibility of the duty Manager. The second step is to inform the guest of actions they must implement while self-isolating. This is the responsibility of the duty Manager. The third step is for the staff to use the following protocols while the guest is self-isolating.

Guest protocol while self-isolating

- Guest(s) staying in the hotel for self-isolation must not leave the hotel room during the self-isolation period without medical permission. The collection of meals at reception and leaving the guest room is strictly forbidden.
- Guest(s) who are self-isolating and those staying with them have to check their body temperature twice a day and monitor their health condition. If they have fever or develop other symptoms, they have to inform the Hotel Manager who will inform the authorities and seek expert medical advice.
- If the guest(s) require additional supplies such as laundry, toiletries or tea and coffee, they are to contact reception.

Staff protocol for guest who are self-isolating

When a guest is self-isolating in their room the following protocol applies to all staff:

- Minimise contact with the guests as far as possible; For example, use a trolley for the transportation of requested items including delivery of meal using meal box with cover, and place the trolley/tray/items outside the guest room in the way that the guest could collect the meal box without leaving the room.
- Wear a facemask **and gloves** if you need to enter the room of the guests and remind the guest wear a facemask before you enter. Maintain appropriate social distance whenever practicable and perform hand hygiene immediately after leaving the room as per Appendix I.
- Staff should put on a facemask, gloves, and face shield if in contact with the symptomatic guest(s).
- Provide garbage bags for the guest to wrap their waste for collection by staff.
- Make spare linen available within the hotel room or provide linen for replacement upon request.
- Provide the guest with items for cleaning and disinfection upon request. The guest can consider cleaning and disinfecting the room and toilet with bleach.
- **All waste, rubbish or refuse is to be left in the entrance hall of the room for collection by the hotel staff. No refuse is to be left outside bedrooms.**

Protocol for cleaning and disinfection of the room when a suspected/confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs

The following protocol is to be used to ensure that the room returns to a safe state once a guest with COVID-19 symptoms has left.

Preparation

- At all time when cleaning a room, staff must wear appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) including:
 - a) Facemask
 - b) Latex gloves
 - c) Disposable gown
 - d) Eye protection (visor/face shield) and
 - e) Cap (optional)
- Prepare the following solution of bleach for use to disinfect the room. Mix 1 part of household bleach with 49 parts of water.

Enhanced environmental disinfection

- Disinfect all potentially contaminated surfaces or items by using the prepared bleach solution.
- For carpets in hotel room, the Hotel Manager will contact the carpet cleaning company and arrange for them to come in and steam clean the carpets with the appropriate chemicals.
- If appropriate and necessary, after thorough cleaning with the bleach solution, ultraviolet radiation may be used.
- All used linen should NOT be agitated to prevent possible environmental / handler contamination. All used linen should be packed in laundry bags at the site of collection; these bags are then securely tied. This bag is then placed in another bag which is then securely tied as well. Laundry bags must be no more than two thirds full. Fluid resistant bag of sufficient tensile strength will be used.

Disposal of cleaning equipment

- After cleaning the room put all the wastes and cleansing tools e.g. cloths, mop heads, in the garbage bag.
- Carefully remove PPE, put them in the garbage bag, and then perform hand hygiene as per Appendix I.
- Wearing a new pair of gloves, seal the waste bag tight and dispose it

properly in covered rubbish bin.

- Remove new gloves carefully. Wash hands again, as per Appendix I, with liquid soap and water.

Re-opening of cleaned room

The room is to be ventilated and not to be assign to a guest for a minimum of 24 hours. (Airbnb, 2020)

If there is blood, secretions, vomitus or excreta spillage

In these instances, enhanced measures must be taken.

- Cleansing staff should wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) including surgical facemask, gloves, disposable gown (boiler suit), eye protection (visor/face shield) and cap (optional).
- Use forceps to hold the strong absorbent disposable towels to wipe away the blood, secretions, vomitus, or excreta during a preliminary clean up.
- Then put the forceps and used absorbent disposable towels in a garbage bag carefully without contaminating oneself/the environment.
- Disinfect with 1 in 4 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach with 4 parts of water), wipe from the outside inward, leave for 10 minutes, rinse with water and wipe dry afterwards.
- After the procedure, put all the wastes and cleansing tools (e.g. forceps, cloth, mop head) in the garbage bag.
- Carefully remove PPE, put them in the garbage bag, and then perform hand hygiene straight away.
- Wear a pair of new gloves, seal the waste bag tight and dispose it properly in covered rubbish bin. Then, label the rubbish bin and put it in a safe undisturbed place until collection.
- Remove gloves carefully. Wash hands, as per Appendix I, with liquid soap and water.
- Change out of clothes into new clothes and launder the old clothes straight away.

According to the WHO recommendations, machine wash the clothes with warm water at

60–90°C (140–194°F) with laundry detergent. The laundry can then be dried according to routine procedures.

Updating Housekeeping system

It is important that the hotel knows the cleanliness status of each room. Although this can be physically checked by seeing if the room has been sealed, the eZee system needs to be updated. Therefore, when housekeeping have cleaned a room, the eZee system will be updated to change the room status from dirty to clean. This is the responsibility of the duty Manager.

Cleaning of staff PPE equipment

All gloves and facemasks supplied by the hotel are disposable and should be placed in bags in the rubbish. The only item of PPE that needs cleaning are the face shields/visors. These are to be cleaned with disinfectant which is made up by mixing 1 part of household bleach with 4 parts of water.

External supply of laundry

At the time of writing, Berkshire Linen Services have reported that they do not have any protocols regarding the collection and delivery of linen to the hotel. The reason being that the company is closed. Once the company re-opens, they will advise the hotel of the protocols to use. When these protocols are known, this document will be updated.

Specific equipment cleaning instructions

Fingerprint Machine

The fingerprint machine to log staff in and out of their shift does not operate if a person is wearing gloves. Therefore, to ensure that the fingerprint machine is safe to use the following procedure will be used:

1. Staff will wash their hands as per appendix I of this document.
2. The window on which the finger is pressed upon will be wiped with an anti-bacterial wipe. This wipe will then be disposed of in the bin.
3. The staff member will then operate the machine using their fingerprint.
4. The window will then be cleaned again with an anti-bacterial wipe.
5. The staff member will then wash their hands as per appendix I of this document.

PDQ machine

All staff using the pdq machine must wear gloves when operating it. This is

important as the guest will handle the machine as well. On completion of the transaction, the whole machine must be cleaned with an anti-bacterial wipe. The number pad, the display, the sides and the bottom of the machine. The gloves must then be disposed of and new gloves worn.

Telephone

All staff using the telephone must wear gloves when operating it. On completion of the call, the whole machine must be cleaned with an anti-bacterial wipe. The number pad, the display, the sides and the bottom of the phone. The gloves must then be disposed of and new gloves worn.

Dishwasher

The following procedure has been identified as a suitable method of cleaning the dishwasher (Gibbs, 2015). On completion of a wash cycle carry out the following:

Clear the drain: Remove the bottom dish rack. Inspect the dishwasher drain, removing any gunk or food caught there. This will improve drainage, increase cleaning efficiency and prevent damage to the dishwasher.

Put vinegar in dishwasher: Start with an empty dishwasher. Place about 250 ml of white vinegar in a dishwasher-safe container on the upper rack of the machine. Run the dishwasher through a hot-water cycle. This will wash away grease and grime and remove musty odours, too.

Baking soda rinse: Sprinkle about 250 ml of baking soda across the bottom of the dishwasher. Run a short, hot water cycle. The dishwasher will be fresh-smelling and have a brightened, stain-free interior.

Coffee machine

The coffee machine will be relocated to the kitchen. The reason being that this is a high touch piece of equipment and therefore poses a significant risk of passing on COVID-19. By keeping it to the kitchen this means that only staff can use it. Any guest can request a drink from the machine but a member of staff must obtain the drink for the guest.

To clean the machine, switch it off at the mains. Using anti-bacterial wipes or a solution of one part disinfectant and four parts water, wipe/wash all surfaces of the machine. Gloves must be worn when cleaning the machine.

Re-opening of the hotel

Before the hotel allows guests to return to the hotel, the hotel Manager will prepare a 'Re-opening' checklist Plan. Until all the items on the check list are completed the hotel will not receive any guests. Details of the checklist are in the 'Re-open Checklist Plan'.

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Appendix I - Performing hand hygiene properly

Many infectious diseases can be transmitted through contact. If hands are contaminated with pathogens, especially when they are soiled with respiratory discharge or faecal matters, diseases include dysentery, cholera, hepatitis, influenza and foot and mouth disease can be spread easily. Observance of hand hygiene is a prerequisite of the prevention of the spread of communicable diseases. Using soap and water or alcohol-based sanitiser can achieve hand hygiene.

When to perform hand hygiene?

- Before and after touching eyes, nose and mouth;
- Before eating and preparing food;
- After using the toilet;
- When hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions, e.g. after coughing or sneezing;
- After changing diapers or handling soiled items from children or the sick
- After touching animals, poultry or their droppings;
- After handling garbage;
- After touching public installations or equipment, such as handrails, light switches or door knobs/handles;
- Before and after visiting hospitals, residential care homes or caring for the sick;
- Any time staff find their hands are dirty.

How to select appropriate agents for hand hygiene?

It is advised to clean hands with liquid soap and water when hands are visibly dirty or visibly soiled with blood and body fluid, after using the toilet or changing diapers. When hands are not visibly soiled, hand hygiene with 70-80% alcohol-based sanitiser is an effective alternative to soap and water.

Steps for hand hygiene

- Wet hands under running water.
- Apply soap or sanitiser and rub hands together to make a soapy lather.
- Away from the running water, rub hands for at least 20 seconds. Do not rinse off the soap while rubbing.
- Rinse hands thoroughly under running water.
- Dry hands thoroughly with either a clean cotton towel, a paper towel, or a hand dryer.
- The cleaned hands should not touch the water tap directly again. For example: use a paper towel to wrap around the faucet in order to turn it off.

Appendix II – Proper cough manners

